

A LECTURE
ON THE
AMERICAN WAR OF SECESSION,

DELIVERED BY
DUGALD MACDONALD,

On the 9th of August, 1864, in the Hall of the Mechanics' Institute, Montreal.

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W. DALTON,
NEWS DEALER &
STATIONER
MONTREAL.

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DEDICATED,
BY PERMISSION, TO
LIEUTENANT BENNET H. YOUNG,
OF THE CONFEDERATE ARMY,
BY HIS OBEDIENT SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

LECTURE

ON

THE AMERICAN WAR OF SECESSION.

The year fourteen hundred and ninety-seven was one of great importance to the world. At that time the frail craft which the liberality of a Spanish queen had furnished to Christopher Columbus, returned to the port of Palos in Spain, bearing with it, those noble and gallant adventurers who had risked their lives on the trackless path of an unknown ocean, and that glorious freight of news which at once astonished and gladdened the eastern hemisphere. Glorious indeed was that news, and honour to the genius and the memory of that noble mind which, soaring above the settled opinion of the day in which he lived, conceived the idea, that there were lands unknown beyond the sea. The compass had done its duty, and the master-mind and the energetic courage of Columbus alone dared to cross the unknown elements, and raise the veil of darkness which hid that noble continent from the rest of the world. Europe at this time was labouring under the bondage of the feudal laws, the staid ideas of an unprogressive age, governed by the illiberal minds of the aristocratic ministers of despotic monarchs, who believed in the divine right of kings to rule "without control." The only difference acknowledged in society was that between lord and vassal. Wealth, or no-

bility, or noble relationship,—these were the only passports to success and celebrity. Constitutional liberty was unknown, or at least for the most part a mere theory; and the people were scarcely more than the instruments in the hands of their royal masters. But the age of progress had arrived, the bonds of European servitude and despotism were broken, and mankind instinctively obeyed the Divine command to go forth and rule the world. The long pent-up genius of the Old World found a home and a field in the new-born continent. The surplus population of all the European nations looked to America. France sent forth her expeditions, her people, her missionaries and her treasure to colonize the country, and well did she succeed. From the Gulf of the St. Lawrence throughout the centre of the continent, along the great lakes and the Mississippi river to the Gulf of Mexico the French flag was honoured. Spain sent her chivalry to Mexico, and established the sway of her sceptre in the ancient kingdom of Montezuma. England peopled the Atlantic seaboard. In fine, the inhabitants of all European nations contributed to the settlement of the newly discovered continent, and they called it the "Land of the Free."

Bold, indeed, must have been those men who left their native homes to brave the dangers of the great unknown, unchartered oceanic highway, to sow the seeds of civilization in a strange land, where the hardships and the dangers which they had to encounter were no less great than those through which they had passed.

In course of time the French lost possession of their western colonies, and England became the grand proprietress of North America. Her principal possessions were the thirteen colonies, which, with their adjuncts, form what

are now called the United States of America; and of these shall I now speak, as they form the subject of my present lecture.

Years went on—the mother country at length found herself embarrassed by reason of foreign wars in which she was engaged. Her exchequer became exhausted; and as a means to fill her depleted coffers, the administration of Lord North proposed to raise taxes from the colonies by imposing a stamp tax. They laid an embargo upon their trade, which had now become an important branch of imperial wealth. The colonists prayed for a redress of their grievances. They remonstrated and protested against the right of the imperial government to tax them for debts which they did not incur, or to restrict the efforts of their industry. But the throne was deaf to their remonstrances. In vain did Burke admonish the government of its error; in vain did that celebrated statesman warn them of the precipice on which they stood. The ministers were blind to the expression of public opinion in the colonies. England, who was the mistress of the seas, treated the colonial representatives, at the foot of the throne, with haughty disdain. But three millions of gallant people, who had suffered the miseries of despotic policy in the Old World, and the dangers and hardships of settling in the New World, were not the men tamely to submit to aggression. They had done all that loyal and independent-minded men could do. They had supplicated at the foot of royalty—they prayed—they remonstrated—they protested. What more could they do? Were they to lie tamely down, and allow the imposition of foreign legislation to oppress them? No; every dictate of loyalty consistent with honour had been obeyed; and when they found they had no justice to

expect, except from heaven and themselves, they drew their swords, and on the 4th of July, 1776, proclaimed their independence to the world. Hostilities were immediately engaged in ; and, after years of warfare, they succeeded in obtaining the acknowledgment of the independence which they had previously declared. On the 17th of September, 1787, the States thus liberated entered into a federal compact, and framed the Constitution of the United States. At various times afterwards other States were admitted into the Union, until it assumed the magnificent proportions of an empire, numbering thirty-three states, besides territories, and embracing all the extent of country lying between British America on the north and Mexico on the south, and having for its boundaries the Atlantic and Pacific oceans on the east and west.

The republican form of government which had been adopted by the United States, was looked upon as being a mere theory,—an innovation on the old monarchical system in Europe, and its existence was predicted to be but of short duration. However, the bold revolutionists set themselves right earnestly to work out the great problem of self-government. The country was young. A vast field was open to the industrious, the enterprising, and the adventurous. Every revolution and political shock in Europe gave new labourers to this extensive field. The government was generous, and received all with open arms ; and the country increased in intelligence, wealth and importance.

But in this year of grace, 1864, what a change has been wrought in the condition of that once prosperous and happy country ! After the great problem of self-government had been tried successfully during the space of four-score years, it is now rent asunder. We find one portion of

these States arrayed in arms against the other; engaged in a fierce, determined civil strife, fighting with all the deadly enmity of inveterate foes, and destroying a great portion of the wealth and treasure of its vast resources. Wherefore all this carnage, and this great hostility? What demon has descended upon that noble country? Whose evil genius has caused this appalling conflagration? Whose evil spirit has tempted man to raise his hand against his fellow? Whose destructive influence has despoiled the fruitful soil of its industrious husbandman, the productive factory of its operatives, and at once paralyzed commerce and advancement?

What was the cause of this dire conflict which is now being waged with such disastrous effects between the North and South? Is it an insurrection headed by some lawless demagogue to overthrow the constituted authority of the land? or is it a justifiable war carried on by men to maintain their rights and the Constitution? Let us see. On the 20th of December, 1860, South Carolina passed an ordinance of secession, and left the Union. The action of this State was soon followed by others, which the North is now, and has been for the last four years, using all her mighty resources to subdue. What was the cause of this act of secession? We shall see. The thirteen States which effected their independence, joined together for self-preservation; individually no one of them was able to cope against England, but united they were able to gain the independence which they asserted. The Union was then founded on the principle of common interest, which each State had to obtain the redress of its grievances. A federal form of Government was then established, under a Constitution subscribed to by each of the seceding States, certain rights

were ceded to the general Government for the good of the whole. But each State retained its sovereignty and independence; slavery was acknowledged, and in that institution we find the cause of the present American difficulties.

It was a sad day for humanity when that British ship landed its cargo of human beings on the soil of Virginia to become the slaves of their fellow-men. That freight of Africans has since cast a gloom over the civilized world—has severed the bond of unity between the component parts of one of the most splendid of human fabrics which the universe ever saw, and merged it into scenes of blood, disaster, and woe.

But no matter how much the institution of slavery may be revolting to the human mind; no matter how desirable it may be to see that dark blot wiped off the otherwise unstained escutcheon of the United States; still we must bear in mind that the institution was established, that the slave-holding States had acquired the right, and that that right was acknowledged by the Constitution. As a matter of right, therefore, must we treat this question. Consequently, by virtue of the sovereignty and independence of every State of which the Union was composed, the Federal Government had no right to legislate on the question of slavery.

The State alone had the right; and any legislation or interference on the part of the Federal Government would have been an encroachment on the rights of a sovereign and independent State.

If any such legislative aggression were attempted by the Federal Government against the uncaded rights of any State in the Union, who should decide of the infraction? To what tribunal should the parties refer? The true doctrine

on this point was well laid down by the celebrated Thomas Jefferson in the resolutions which he drafted to the Kentucky legislature, which asserted the limited powers of the Government under the compact of the Constitution, and maintained that as in all other cases of compact among parties having no common judge, each party has a right to judge for himself as well of the infraction as of the means and measure of redress.

When the Southern States seceded from the Union, of what did they complain? Did they take constitutional means to settle the existing difficulties? or did they plunge themselves headlong into the vortex of rebellion. The dissensions which exist between the Northern and Southern States, depend mainly on a question of interest, and have been of long standing. The North, from the position and nature of its climate, is more a trading and manufacturing than an agricultural country. The South, on the contrary, is purely an agricultural country. This branch of its industry constitutes its whole wealth, and all the energy and means of its capitalists have been used for the purpose of developing and increasing their natural resources. In order to obtain this end, a cheap system of labour was necessary. That of keeping people held to labour, was considered to be the most advantageous, and was consequently adopted. What was at first only a system, became by usage and the sanction of the Constitution of the United States an acknowledged and established institution. To the maintenance of this institution the Southerners have always looked with a jealous eye, and every attempt to deprive them of the right to regulate and govern it, has been considered in the light of an attack upon their sovereignty and independence. The North, from the superiority

of the numbers of its population, and the greater temperature of its climate, together with the nature of the pursuits of its people, does not require the same system ; pretends to abhor it as being subversive of the great principles of the American Revolution. "That all men are born free and equal"—in Europe this principle has cost the lives of millions in the last century. The American States in this age seem destined to be an equal prey to the fanaticism of theorists and sentimental philanthropists. The new England States were the birth place of abolitionism.

But when we come to understand the antecedents of the same New Englanders, we shall be in a better position to form an estimate of the character of their hostility to the South, and the amount of merit they deserve for their present crusade in the cause of humanity. Well : the New England States were settled by a band of English puritan colonists. They first left their native home in England, because, according to the statutory law of their country, they were not freemen, they could not worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience ; and with bold hearts and a heroism worthy of the ancient Christians, they emigrated to Hamburg, but finding that from their ignorance of the language, they would be labouring under a great disadvantage, they resolved to emigrate to America. They soon put their heroic resolve into effect, and, after a successful voyage, landed at Plymouth Rock.

I honour the courage, the heroism, and the self-sacrificing spirit of the men who, for the sake of principle,—which they considered right,—undertook to conquer and to civilize the domain of King Philip. If they had acted with the liberality which they should have received in their own country ; if they had granted the same rights to others in

their new home, which they claimed for themselves in England ; if justice and a due regard to the rights of others had been the ruling motive of their actions,—their memory would to-day be blessed, honoured, and revered. But, how different was their conduct ! Those men who had encountered unknown perils to free themselves from oppression, the moment they found themselves in power, acted with the same intolerance and despotism towards those who differed from their opinions, as they themselves had been treated with in the land of their nativity. They enacted the blue laws, and persecuted all who from conscientious motives would not kneel before the same altar with them. How different was the conduct of the French Huguenots, who settled in the South,—that of the Quakers who settled in Pennsylvania,—that of the Catholics who peopled Maryland,—and that of the Dutch who colonised New York ! What was there more in the constitution of the puritans of New England, than in that of any other of the different races or sects who emigrated to the country, that they should set themselves up as prophets in Israel—as the ambassadors of the Most High ? Well, the same egotism and spirit of intolerance which they exhibited from the first day on which they landed on the shores of America are their characteristics to-day. They are the guardians of America—the light which must be followed. They launch forth their opinion, and forsooth it must be obeyed. But let us see what great sacrifices have they ever made for the Union ? By what right do they claim to be the dictators of what is right and just to their sister States ? Are they superior to the rest of her fellow-citizens ? They advocate the abolition of slavery,—but they have no slaves to be freed ; consequently they have nothing to lose in that

respect. But they say that slavery is an inhuman institution, and must be done away with—the Federal Government will indemnify the slaveholders. How liberal! The slaveholding States would then have to pay more than half the price of the indemnification. It is an ascertained fact that the bulk of the revenues of the Union was collected from the South; that the North derived an annual revenue of from forty to fifty millions from the South; and that from unequal taxes, and the operations of trade, the North has reaped a profit of more than 200 millions of dollars per year! This is the calculation of a Northern writer, given as a fact in Pollard's History of the first year of the war.

The Northerners then advocate the abolition of slavery; but they did not hesitate to reap the benefits of the institution. They advocate the abolition of slavery to-day; but they forget that at the time of the union of the thirteen States, slavery existed. It formed an important subject of the compact which was then entered into.

If slavery had been ignored, no union would have taken place at the time of the revolution. The Northerners could not have refused the slaveholding States the rights which they possessed. To do so would have been to endanger their own liberties. But when once the difficulties under which they then laboured were surmounted, and the independence of the States obtained, the Northerners, with pious zeal, turned around and endeavoured to deprive their benefactors of the source of their wealth.

Now I do not mean to put myself forth as the advocate of slavery. God forbid that I should see any man oppressed. I am ready to grant all human beings the same rights which I claim for myself. But we must argue according to the circumstances of the case.

Slavery may be, and is an unnatural institution ; the very name is revolting. Our fathers have fought for independence ; and if our liberties were threatened by a foreign foe, I feel that there is both spirit and courage enough amongst us to imitate, to emulate the valorous deeds of our ancestors, and with fire and sword to meet our enemies on the threshold of our country. If we look back to the record of the past, we will find that there has been no age, from the earliest days of history to the present, in which there has not been slaves. The Jews themselves—the chosen people of God—passed their term in the land of bondage. And to speak only of modern times, had not France, Spain, Russia, Prussia, Austria, and England their slaves ? Does not slavery now exist in South America ? and are there not to-day slaves pinioned and oppressed in the very heart of the Old World—in the persons of the oppressed nationalities of Europe, who yearn for the liberty and independence, of which the tyranny and invasion of despotic power have despoiled them ?

Slavery, as I have already said, may be, and is apparently an unnatural institution—but by Divine permission it has always existed.

And who of us will DARE arraign Heaven for what it permits ? Who can tell what may be the object of Providence in thus permitting slavery, and making it a necessity in the present day ?

I hold that it is and will be a benefit to the African race. If slavery did not exist in America, where would the negroes be, who are now in the Southern States ? Would the white man ever have brought them across the Atlantic out of pure love for them ?

Interest is the “ ruling motive ” of all human actions.

It was through interest arising from the necessity of cheap labour that first induced the traffic of the negroes. If that necessity never existed, he would never have been imported. And where would he be to-day? Roaming about in ignorance, and a slavery worse than that of the dungeon,—the blind adorer of some king of Dahomey liable to be hurled into eternity on the altar of idolatry at the barbarous will of his despotic king. How is the slave in the South? Is he not fed? Is he not clothed? Is he not cared for in all his wants? Is he not Christianized? and are the doors of civilization not open to him?

When would these boons ever be his in the sun-burnt plains of his native Africa? As it is, I feel that there is a providence in the destiny of the African,—that the day will come when his services can be dispensed with,—when he will be enlightened, and when, if he has fellow feeling enough, he may return to the land of his fathers, and there employ his knowledge in redeeming them from the thralldom in which they are. Liberty and civilization are not to be obtained in a day: they cost labour, sufferings, and privations. But the philanthropic abolitionist will still say, "Slavery is unnatural, and must be abolished." Is there not a time for everything? Now I should be most happy to see an end put to the institution. But has the time come,—is the slave yet sufficiently civilized or Christianized? I answer that he is not; and if he be not, I hold that the greatest injury which could be done to the Southern slaves would be to free them all at one *full sweep*. Liberty is a dangerous thing in the hands of ignorant men. To-day the slaves are fed, clothed, lodged and cared for in all their wants; they are under the tutelage of their masters. Free them all to-morrow, and

where will they be, and what will they be, thrown upon the world,—poor, ignorant, and unprotected,—the prey of the strong. The highway of crime will be their path, and misery their portion. To the abolitionist I would say, leave the negro to his fate; his destiny is in the hands of Him who “tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.”

But still to free the negro, the Northern abolitionists have engaged in a war of aggression. From the time of the formation of the Union, until the present, the same spirit of hostility has always existed, in a greater or lesser degree towards the South. The spirit of abolitionism, blind alike to the cause of humanity, and the interest of the Union, preponderated in the North until it almost became a mania.

The South was prosperous, and the North benefited by her prosperity; but, like the man in the fable, the North should “kill the hen that laid the golden egg.”

The South was always firm and true to the Union. There is not to-day on record one single act of aggression on the part of the South against the North.

Whenever danger threatened the federation, the South sent forth her sons and her treasures with no sparing hand. Let us see the facts. In the war of 1812, the North furnished 58,552 soldiers, and the South 98,812, making a majority of 40,260 in favour of the latter. In the Mexican war the little State of South Carolina sent forth 5696; the New England States, with all their boasted loyalty and patriotism, only 1048, making a majority of 4648. The Scath-erners have always been true to their flag, and it was only when driven to the outer wall that they had recourse to the last means of maintaining their rights, and they withdrew from a union which was only one in name.

What man is there among us who would not use every effort and strain every nerve to preserve his own individual rights from the encroachment of another? Why then should not a collection of men, a nation arise to vindicate their honour, and protect the soil on which they live?

The aggressive acts of the North were continuous, as they were ill devised, and impolitic.

The union was an extensive establishment, embracing as it did the largest portion of the North American continent. The manners, customs, habits, interest and pursuits of the various States differed greatly, indeed nearly as much as the different nations of Europe, and this was owing as well to the origin of the inhabitants as to the institution of slavery.

Adams, that acute statesman, after a tour through the South with the foresight of a keen observer, saw the rock which endangered the ship of state; and he advised moderation, concession, and forbearance. If the maxims deducible from the expression of his views had been adopted as the rule of action of the North; if each and every of its sovereignties and dependencies had respected these of the South, in the same manner as they respected those of the different monarchies in Europe, we might to-day have the pleasing spectacle of an harmonious union between all the members of the once great republic, and, at no very distant day, the abolition of slavery completely effected. But the politic teachings of Adams were disregarded.

We have now convulsions where there should be tranquillity; hostility where there should be industry; and war where there should be peace.

It is certainly desirable to obtain the abolition of slavery. I say this lest my feelings and principles may be misin-

terpreted or misconstrued. But to any one who has ever studied the constitution of human nature, and the politics of our neighbours across the lines, it will appear plainly that that question was not approached in a proper manner. Human nature is so constructed that we must always expect a difference of opinion between individuals. But that difference in opinion, instead of being injurious to a State, is, on the contrary, highly beneficial. But to be beneficial it should be promiscuous. I mean that it should be general or national, not local. For wherever a territorial line of demarcation exists between persons holding different opinions; whenever the citizens of a State array themselves as the champions of the laws of their respective localities, it becomes sectional and unhealthy. The only means which then exist to purify, to calm, the political atmosphere, are to come to a settlement on some basis of principle, either by mutual concessions—a declaration of rights—or *separation*.

If the North had acted in a different manner toward the South, there is no doubt but this difficulty would have never taken place, and much carnage would have been spared on both sides.

In the years 1828 and 1832 South Carolina asserted the doctrine of state rights in bold and intelligible language on the subject of the tariff which was declared to be unconstitutional, and a hardship to the South. The Government, however, acted promptly, and the matter of difficulty was allayed. The North at that time pressed upon the South; the same rights which the Northern States claimed for themselves in 1812, when they considered themselves subjected to oppressive taxes, they refused to their Southern fellow-citizens in the years 1828 and 1832. Then the

settlement of the territories, and their admission to the Union, gave rise to the much vexed question of slavery.

The territories were public property of the domain of the Federal Government—as such they were considered. Thither the Southerners went with their families, their slaves, and opened plantations. To their efforts the colonization of those territories was almost entirely due.

But when those large and Federal colonies became populous enough to require a Government, the philanthropic abolitionists of the North stepped in and refused to permit the Southerners to enjoy the rights which they had already established.

The Southerners contended that the existence of slavery in the territories or in any new State should depend on the will of the majority of the voters of such territory or state. A compromise was, however, made in 1850, on the admission of Missouri into the Union.

But the same spirit existed still in the North. Slavery was made a question of political agitation by the aspirants for governmental honours, office seekers and sentimentalists. Petitions poured into the senate from all the disinterested and humane philanthropists of the North, demanding the abolition of that obnoxious institution, notwithstanding that the counsels of the Federal nation had, as they declared, no right whatever to legislate on that question.

The severest invectives, denunciations, and insults were hurled unsparingly against the slaveholders.

Helper's book was made the text book of the fanatic orators of the Republican party—that book which declared at page 163 “that three-fourths of a century hence, if the South retains slavery, which God forbid! she will be to the North what Poland is to Russia, Cuba to Spain, Ireland

to England." At page 156, our banner is inscribed, "No co-operation with slave-holders in politics; no fellowship with them in religion; no affiliation with them in society;—no recognition with pro-slavery men, except as ruffians, outlaws and criminals."

At page 180, "In any event, come what will—transpire what may—the institution of slavery must be abolished."

At page 149,—“We are determined to abolish slavery at all hazards, in defiance of all the opposition of whatever nature it is possible for the slave-o-crats to bring against us. Of this they may take due notice, and govern themselves accordingly.”

At page 158, "It is our honest conviction that all the pro-slavery slaveholders deserve at once to be reduced to a parallel with the basest criminals that lie fettered within the cells of our public prisons."

The last I shall extract from this book is from page 329: "Shall we pat the blood-hounds of slavery? Shall we fee the curs of slavery? Shall we pay the whelps of slavery? No, never!"

The promulgation of these principles and stated intentions contained a formal declaration of war against the interests of the South. But these violent and intolerant enunciations have only served to defeat the object which was pretended to be sought. The South became justly alarmed; she took the same precautions which all independent States adopt to defend their rights. She was determined to be the sole mistress of her institutions; that she should never be to the North what Poland is to Russia, Cuba to Spain, or Ireland to England. If the North inscribed their banners with "no co-operation with slave-holders in politics; no fellowship with them in re-

ligion; no recognition of pro-slavery men, except as ruffians, outlaws, and criminals," it was time for the South to put an end to the Union, which was so distasteful to Northern sentiments—and she stamped the impress of nullification and liberty upon the standard.

The seeds of secession were sown by Northern hands, and brought forth their fruit when the great Republican husbandman undertook to eradicate the obnoxious Southern plant. The South never desired separation from the Union—but it was forced upon her.

Of her right to secede there can be no doubt. The compact of the Union was a contract between a number of independent sovereignties for the mutual benefit of each. When the Union ceased to procure or ensure the objects for which it had been entered into, it was clearly the right of the South to recilitate the contract. And the North is by no means justified in waging a war against the South to continue a union (which William H. Seward, Secretary of State, once said, to "uphold by force would be despotism") to which the people of the South have unanimously declared they will not submit. This is the philosophy of the American revolution. An obligation is declared to be a bond of right, by which all the contracting parties were equally bound. While it was the duty of all the States to advance the affairs of the general Government—each of the States were bound to respect the local institutions, as well as the sovereignty of the other. And if the contract of the Union were not fully carried out, the contracting party or parties aggrieved would be justified in demanding and enforcing the nullification of the contract.

The accession of Mr. Lincoln to the high place of President, brought on the crisis. The hostility to the South,

both of himself and the party which placed him in power, was openly declared and well known.

All the high offices of the Government were filled by the most intolerant of the members of the Republican party. The Southerners on their part remonstrated and protested in their solemn conventions. But the tocsin of war had sounded from the Republican camp—and the South sought safety and protection in secession. Even after this step had been taken by the cotton States, the border States withheld their accession from the Confederacy in the vain hope that the existing difficulties might be adjusted. But the party in power would not forego one tittle of its pretensions—would adjust nothing—nor admit of a peaceful separation. The South said, since we cannot live in harmony together, let us separate—we will make treaties of peace, and we will still be friends. The North ridiculed the idea. They had learned to look upon the Union by which they had benefited so much as an establishment, which nothing could shake, and which would exist until the end of time. Thirty days, it was thought, would suffice to whip the Southerners into subjection—but they overrated their own power and miscalculated that of their opponents.

When and how this contest will terminate, are secrets which the future must disclose. The American difficulties have certainly up to the present brought about very disastrous results. But much good may yet come from them. Many things for which the different countries of Europe were dependent upon the United States, have been sought and found elsewhere. When this war shall have terminated, no matter in whose favour, whether the Union be re-established, or not, each of the States will have a better appreciation of its own rights, and a higher regard for those of

others. But nevertheless, it is certainly to be regretted that a disruption took place in this age before it had accomplished the great work for which it seemed destined. The country is young yet, and the greatness of its resources unknown. Whatever advancement might have been made in the colonisation and the exploration of these resources, might be better effected under the influence of a consolidated and liberal Union.

But the Union seems to have been a machine too ponderous and gigantic to be worked successfully by the ruling party. Want of foresight, want of moderation, have effected the disruption. And the Republican politicians of the North have now the satisfaction of seeing how their vainful boastings have been realized. During four years have the Northern States used the most gigantic efforts and carried on a fruitless war for the purpose of putting down what they are pleased to term an unnatural rebellion. During four years have they lavished away untold sums of money, and sent their citizens by thousands to be slaughtered by Southern chivalry, or to die from the pestilence of Southern swamps. The best blood of the country has been and is still being shed in this terrible struggle. If the Northern statesmen had been more tolerant and politic in their opinions and mode of action, the abolition of slavery might be at no distant day completely effected in a peaceable manner without shedding a single drop of blood. Great reforms can never be effected by the use of an armed force. The moment that the proposed reform assumes the appearance of wholesale innovation or aggression, it then becomes a rallying point to those whose interests are effected.

England was slow in wiping out slavery from amongst a

number of her institutions; but the means taken to gain the extinction of slavery in America were not those dictated by a sound policy, as the sequel up to the present has already shown. The South has amply testified to the world both her capacity to govern herself, and maintain her independence. No effort has been left untried to subdue her; and to-day, after four years of carnage and destruction, the contending powers find themselves in the same relative positions as the day when the first gun boomed from the battlements of Fort Sumter. The Northerners, forgetful of the noble example of the Greeks, when their liberties were threatened by the Persian legions, declared that they would not owe their liberty to their slaves, refused to put arms in their hands, and determined to die gloriously, or be freed by their own valour. These Northerners of the nineteenth century proclaimed the liberty of the Southern slaves, and gave encouragement to the most hideous of strifes of servile insurrection.

The North has undoubtedly entered upon a war of subjugation. How the contest may eventuate, we know not. But judging from the antecedents of the contending parties, and the nature of the causes of dispute, it can be easily seen that the South has always acted on the defensive, — has always acted with spirit tempered with moderation. Every effort has been made by her to obviate hostilities, to put an end to the daily slaughter, and effect the return of peace. But all her overtures have been rejected.

And are we then to witness a war of extermination or subjugation? Even supposing that the North succeeded in subjugating the South, which God forbid! what then? Does she intend to drag the South into an unwilling union, or to treat her as a conquered Province? Or does

she intend, to sacrifice millions of her citizens—impoverish the country, and enslave 8,000,000 of whites to free 4,000,000 of blacks. No! while the spirit of the public men of the South remains unchanged; while the genius of her generals, and the heroism of her soldiers exist, the banner of the North,—which bears the inscription, “that all pro-slavery men, deserve to be at once reduced to a parallel with the basest criminals that lie fettered within the cells of their public prisons,—shall never wave in peace over the live body of a Southern cavalier.

The North can never place the shackles of subjugation around the South. Since, then, the Union is impossible, is it not better to separate than to go to war and lose by it? We cannot view this struggle with indifference. We cannot view it without concern. Peace is desirable. Without it there can be no prosperity or happiness. Let us then hope that the eyes of Northern statesmen may be opened to the enormity of the misfortune which this war is entailing on the human race. That although the Union may never be re-integrated, peace may soon be restored. And while we shall always look with a heartfelt-desire to see the emancipation of the negro, we shall never encourage unconstitutional means of effecting a reform, no matter however great, and plunge a generous nation into all the horrors of civil war; but leave time and Providence to work out its own wise and equitable ends,

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